

# CONTACT

MAGAZINE FOR AND ABOUT MEMBERS OF THE 349TH AIR MOBILITY WING  
TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE, CALIFORNIA

VOL. 19, No. 2

FEBRUARY 2001



# Many opportunities available in wing

Welcome to the February UTA!

I hope you enjoyed the Wing Commander's Calls in January and found it beneficial. My plan is to have quarterly commanders calls and the January call covered the first quarter. For the second quarter, I'll try to attend individual squadron commander's calls. I have found those smaller meetings provide a better forum for questions and answers so that will be my focus. I'll handle the easy questions and I'll bring **CMSgt. Tony Maddux** to handle the tough ones! For the third quarter we'll hold it again in the base theater, tentatively set for Jul, and then we'll go back to squadron level calls for the last quarter.

For those of you at the commander's call on A Flight, those cameras you saw filming our Honor Guard as they posted the colors belonged to Citizen Airmen magazine. They're writing an article about our world class Honor Guard for their March edition of their magazine. They also have a video edition and we'll distribute copies of that when we receive it. Hats off to **TSgt. Darin Farmon, TSgt. Ann-Marie Scott, TSgt. Ross Wood, SSgt. Andre Morton** and **SrA Takeo Eda** for their flawless performance! If you're interested in joining this elite organization, contact **MSgt. Paul McCullough** in the ASTS.

If you're not interested in the pageantry and ceremony of the Honor Guard, perhaps you would like to step up to a different challenge – historian! Our historian, **MSgt. Russell Maxwell**, is looking for a little help in his duties as wing historian. We're looking for a master sergeant or below who has three weeks availability to attend the Historian Apprentice Course and is interested in cross training into the 3HO71 career field. Qualities useful to a historian include: the ability to write or an interest in writing; an interest in learning more about the various units in the wing and how they work; curiosity and the ability to talk to people; self-starter who works well independently!

If this sounds like you, contact your career advisor or call the wing executive officer, **1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Terry Cotter**, (707) 424-3922.

I have one more opportunity to tell you about. This one only applies to company grade officers, second lieutenant thorough captain. The wing has an opportunity to submit two names, a primary and alternate, for attendance at the International Junior



## Pass and Review

By Col. James T. Rubeor

Officer Leadership Development Seminar. It will be held June 7-13 in Munich, Germany, and will include leadership training with other reserve officers from all our NATO allies. This is a great opportunity for a once in a lifetime experience! If you're interested, contact **1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Terry Cotter** at (707) 424-3922 for the application procedures.

I want to give you an update on the new lodging scheduled for Travis AFB. The consulting agency of Evans & Chastain visited the base from Jan. 8-12 and conducted a thorough analysis of the bases facilities and current and future demands. Thanks largely to the outstanding efforts of **Lt. Col. Truman Lum** and **MSgt. Marty Walker**, the team had a very good understanding of our needs here in the 349 AMW. In fact, we were the deciding factor in the decision to build a 450-person facility instead of the standard 350! Now the big question is when they'll start and we're working hard to make it as soon as possible. The proposed site is the area between the current lodging office and the main gymnasium on Travis St. We'll keep you posted on the progress!

I had the good fortune to go out with some of our outstanding KC-10 aircrew members last month on a mission to Alaska. We flew a two-ship up to Eielson AFB to pick up 12 F-16's and bring them to Fallon NAS in Nevada for training. I flew with **Lt. Col. Gregory Holm, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. David Horn, TSgt. James Baker, MSgt. Erik Sandvik, MSgt. Joseph Lambetus, TSgt. Eric Sherman, SSgt. Rebart Ordonio, SSgt. Charles Roberson, TSgt. Linda Robillard** and **MSgt. Jerome Stockton** on the trip up and on the trip back I flew with **2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Joel Dendulk, SSgt. Ernie Valles** and **TSgt. Scott Murphy**. The hard work

and dedication of these crews in some cold and challenging weather is second to none and is indicative of all our great operators. Keep up the good work!

Congratulations to our new colonel selects! The promotion board results were released last month and we had five officers selected: **Col. (Sel) Peter Doby, Col. (Sel) Bohdan Makarewycz, Col. (Sel) Donald Matthews, Col. (Sel) Christopher Stevens** and **Col. (Sel) Joan Sullivan**.

Promotion to colonel is a significant accomplishment and reflects both the hard work of the officer and the support and teamwork of the unit. Well done!

Speaking of hard work and dedication, I want to take a moment to tell you about our plans to highlight some of our best and brightest. **CMSgt. Tony Maddux** has been working to develop a Wing Quarterly Awards program to recognize the Airman, NCO, Senior NCO, First Sgt and Company Grade Officer in the 349 AMW for each quarter. The program starts this month and nominations are due to his office by March 31st for the January-March quarter. If someone in your unit has gone above and beyond in their support of our mission, bring it to the attention of your first sergeant and commander and encourage them to nominate him or her. The nomination form can be found in 349 AMWI 36-2801 and is limited to two pages of accomplishments in the following categories: Leadership & job performance in primary duty, significant self improvement and base or community involvement. A board will be convened to select the winners and we will recognize both the first & second quarter recipients at the wing commander's call in July. Take the time to nominate your superstars!

Before I close, I want to take a moment to acknowledge some of our super performers. Congratulations to our Family Readiness section, **Mr. Jack Watts, TSgt. Al Bedford, TSgt. Ross Wood** and **TSgt. Mary Johnson**! Their section was one of three finalists to compete for the Air Force Family Readiness section of the year! Congratulations also to **Capt. James Wahleithner**, 349 AGS, and **SrA Clifford Bumanglag**, 749 AGS! They are the 15th Air Force nominees for the AMC Outstanding Reserve Associate Maintenance Award. Good luck in the competition at AMC!

See you at the UTA!





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# CONTACT

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February 2001

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Professional military education is designed to strengthen the professional military stature of members through a sound educational program. All supervisors must encourage their people to attend PME courses as soon as they are eligible.

### 5 Commentary: African-American Heritage

This year's African-American Heritage Month theme is "Creating and Defining the African-American Community: Family, Church, Politics, Culture. Each of us belongs to the American community and it is made strong through our willingness to fully embrace racial integration.

### 6 349th MSS recipient of Gerrit D. Foster, Jr. Award

The Air Force Reserve Command recently named the 349th Mission Support Squadron as the recipient of its Gerrit D. Foster, Jr., Outstanding Military Personnel Flight Achievement Award.

### 7 Dental Program extended to families

Traditional Reservists and their families may now participate in an expanded U.S. government dental program.

### 8 Employer Appreciation Day

Give your boss a chance to see the Air Force Reserve in action. Employer Appreciation Days include a briefing, an aircraft display and an orientation flight aboard either a KC-10 or C-5, all designed to give your employer a greater understanding of our mission.

### 9 Wing Briefs

Topics of interest around the wing include: New commander of the 79th Air Refueling Squadron; Annual flu shots are available; Golden Hills Dining Hall opens its doors; and Family Readiness offers financial seminar.

### 11 Reservist gives back to society

Tech. Sgt. April Andersen, the 349th Air Mobility Wing fitness coordinator, gives back to society by being a foster parent. April and her husband have eight children in their family.

## On the Cover



Senior Master Sgt. Joyce Crocker and Tech. Sgt. Doug Smith from the 45th Aerial Port Squadron push a palletized truck inside a KC-10 Extender aircraft. Crocker and Smith were instrumental in helping the 45th APS pass its Expeditionary Operational Readiness Inspection Dec. 3-7, at Pope Air Force Base, N.C. Crocker served as the air freight superintendent for the EORI and Smith was the cargo setup supervisor. See a related photograph on page 7.  
(Photo by Tech. Sgt. Kevin Jackson)

# Education pays career-long dividends

## *PME translates to more stripes, pay, responsibility*

"An investment in education earns the best interest."

There can be no more poignant quote from Benjamin Franklin for enlisted members in the United States Air Force. An investment in education, such as Professional Military Education, will definitely earn the best interest especially when it comes to more stripes and pay.

PME is designed to strengthen the professional military stature of members through a sound educational program. It broadens perspectives, increases knowledge of military studies, communication skills, leadership, Air Force principles and concepts, supervision, and prepares one to assume more responsibility. All supervisors must encourage their people to attend PME courses as soon as they are eligible.

Airman Leadership School is the first PME course. ALS prepares senior airman to assume supervisory duties. This four-week course offers instruction in leadership, followership (teamwork), communication and military citizenship in the Air Force. Reserve members may complete this by correspondence Course 1.



## Chief's Counsel

By Command Chief Master Sgt.  
Anthony L. Maddux

The NCO Academy broadens the leadership and management skills of NCOs. This six-week course covers Air Force history, organization and mission, military justice system, professional skills, customs and courtesies, counseling techniques, and personnel management. Reserve members may complete this by correspondence Course 6. NCOA is required before assuming the rank of master sergeant.

The highest level of PME is the Senior NCO Academy. This seven-week residence course provides the education necessary for senior NCOs to become more effective leaders and managers. SNCOA includes international relations,

national objectives, employment of military forces in achieving Air Force objectives, the Air Force role in force application, management, and effective use of human resources. Reservists may complete this PME by correspondence Course 5.

Promotions depend in large part on your willingness to devote the time and energy needed to complete the required PME. The future of our team, "Team Air Force," also depends on you.

For more information, read AFI 36-2301, Professional Military Education, or call Chief Master Sgt. Robert Adamiak in Education and Training at 424-2931 or 424-1615.



## FLIGHT LINE: What one thing would you say to the new Secretary of Defense?



**Maj. Mercille Locke**  
349th Aeromedical  
Evacuation Squadron

"I'd tell him that reservists shouldn't have to choose between serving in the Air Force and their civilian jobs. I'd like better employer support for the reserve."



**Tech. Sgt. Cindy Schlitz**  
349th Civil Engineer  
Squadron

"I'd like him to know that we serve more than one weekend a month and 15 days a year. We'd like our employers and the public to recognize it."



**Tech. Sgt. Matthew Petrovich**  
349th Medical Squadron

"We need more time for training. We deploy often and need more training so we can be more competent and qualified."



**Darrell Arrington**  
349th Mission Support  
Squadron

"Reservists are an integral part of the Air Force and we should be accepted for it. Since the active duty drawdown, we've picked up the slack."



**Master Sgt. Dewey Powell**  
79th Air Refueling  
Squadron

"I'm primarily concerned about the frequency of our deployments. Maybe we need to reduce our presence in the desert."

# Heritage month to define community

## Civil rights leader's views on integration, segregation explored

By Staff Sgt. Grayland L. Hilt

349th AMW Military Equal Opportunity Office

This year's African-American Heritage Month theme is "Creating and Defining the African-American Community: Family, Church, Politics, Culture."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. will be featured this year. He has been acknowledged in many writings as one of the most respected people in our history and I'd like to explore his views on integration.

Many of the race relations issues in America today stem from the reluctance of some Americans to truly embrace integration. Although our judicial system effectively put an end to segregation, integration is a personal issue that some people haven't totally accepted.

King offered this eloquent defense of integration in a speech delivered before a church conference in Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 27, 1962:

"The problem of race and color prejudice remains America's greatest moral dilemma. When one considers the impact it has upon our nation, internally and externally, its resolution might well determine our destiny. History has thrust upon our generation an indescribably important task—to complete a process of democratization which our nation has too long devel-

oped too slowly, but which is our most powerful weapon for world respect and emulation. How we deal with this crucial

situation will determine our moral health as individuals, our cultural health as a region, our political health as a nation, and our prestige as a leader of the free world. The shape of the world today does not afford us the luxury of an anemic democracy. The price that America must pay for the continued oppression of the Negro is the price of its own destruction. The hour is late; the clock of destiny is ticking out; we must act now before it is too late."

King went on to draw a distinction between desegregation and integration:

"The word segregation represents a system that is prohibitive; it denies the Negro equal access to schools, parks, restaurants, libraries and the like. Desegregation is eliminative and negative, for it simply removes these legal and social prohibitions. Integration is creative, and is therefore more profound and far-reaching than desegregation. Integration is the positive acceptance of desegregation and the welcomed participation of Negroes into the total range of human activities.

Integration is genuine intergroup, interpersonal doing. We do not have to look very far to see the pernicious effects of a desegregated society that is not integrated. It leads to "physical proximity without spiritual affinity." It gives us a society where men are physically desegre-

gated and spiritually segregated, where elbows are together and hearts are apart. It gives us special togetherness and spiritual apartness. It leaves us with a stagnant equality of sameness rather than a constructive equality of oneness."

When we as African-

Americans speak of this year's theme, we must ensure that we are not seeking separatism while creating and defining



ourselves. If we are to learn anything at all from history, we must acknowledge that the races stood together to bring an end to the unpunishable violence endured by minorities.

Many African-Americans were being routinely beaten and killed by vicious mobs. While not all White-Americans agreed with this brutal treatment, their silence was viewed as acceptance. When white students from the north and members of the clergy joined the movement, they were also beaten and killed because they dared to stand up for the oppressed. When those who once stood in silence began to see members of their own race mercilessly beaten and killed, their once silent voices became vocal.

When we speak of community we are likely to diminish the true meaning of the word if we always speak in terms of the Black, White, Hispanic, Asian or Native American community. A community is a body of persons having a common history or common social, economic and political interests.

We all share in our history — the good, bad and ugly. Each of us belongs to the American community and it is made strong through our willingness to fully embrace racial integration.

*"The word segregation represents a system that is prohibitive; it denies the Negro equal access to schools, parks, restaurants, libraries and the like. Desegregation is eliminative and negative, for it simply removes these legal and social prohibitions. Integration is creative, and is therefore more profound and far-reaching than desegregation."*

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



# Budget analyst named civilian of year

**By 1st Lt. Dawn Young**

Wing Public Affairs

When Patsy Boucher was asked about her job she simply stated, "I do the operations and maintenance budget for the 349th Air Mobility Wing." What she did not add was the fact that she works with numbers all day long and has a new title to add to her current one.

The new title Boucher can add to her current job title is Financial Analysis Civilian of the Year for Air Force Reserve Command.

Boucher has been crunching numbers for as far back as she can remember. But she's only been working for the 349th AMW for the past two years.

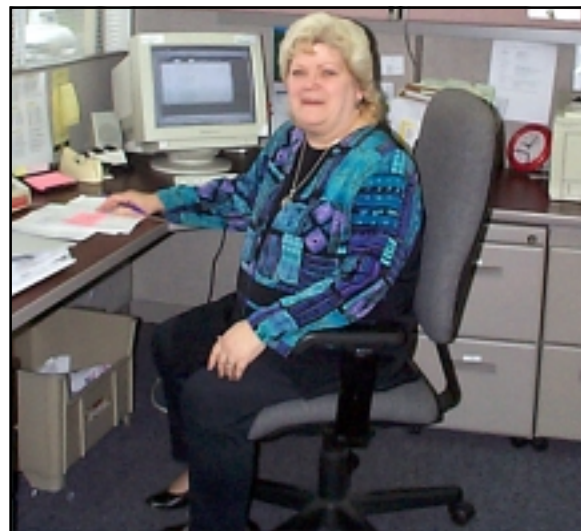
"I previously worked with the Navy and the Army, and it was hard to switch over to the Air Force way of conducting business," said Boucher. "But, everyone here in the office and with the 60th AMW has been very cooperative and supportive in helping me learn my job."

Working in a budget office requires everyone to work together to get the job done. "I can't do my job if someone else in the office didn't do their job to give me the right numbers," explained Boucher. "But, here in this office everyone is helpful."

Boucher tallies the numbers on the operations and maintenance budget for the 349th AMW. This budget area covers civilian pay, travel, transportation, rentals, utilities, communications, printing, facility projects, miscellaneous contracts, supplies and equipment.

"I like to think that the O & M budget takes care of the day-to-day items that run an office, mobility items, plus the few extra bonus items, like a fax machine," explained the Vallejo resident.

"I could not have received this award without the total team effort that was put



forth from this office and the 349th AMW," said Boucher.

"Her work ethic is exemplary," said John McLaughlin, 349th AMW comptroller.

"Daily she arrives early and departs late to ensure all business transactions are complete and correct and to provide time for uninterrupted budget analysis."

## Command selects mission support as top personnel flight

**By Tech. Sgt. Kevin Jackson**

Wing Public Affairs

Air Force Reserve Command recently named the 349th Mission Support Squadron as the recipient of its Gerrit D. Foster, Jr., Category 1, Outstanding Military Personnel Flight Achievement award.

The award is given to the military personnel flight that demonstrates the highest level of mission accomplishment, initiative and innovative programs, and extraordinary and unique accomplishments.

"It wouldn't have been possible without the teamwork between the traditional reservists and the full-time staff," said Chief Master Sgt. Anne Kohutanycz, 349th MSS Superintendent. "There is great camaraderie in the MPF and we just work well together," added Senior Master Sgt. Sandy Matsuoka, Chief of Career Enhancement."

The squadron received kudos during the Air Force Reserve Command's Unit Compliance Inspection in February 2000 for its outstanding support, initiative and program management.

AFRC singled out two best practices, five superior performers and one superior team award.

Superior performance awards were earned by Senior Master Sgt. Kim Shelby, career enhancement; Master Sgt. Nelson Bonilla, career enhancement; Tech. Sgt. Brenda Rivera-Brignoni, Family Care Program; Staff Sgt. Denise Cunningham, Family Care Program; and Harvey Davis, personnel readiness. Career enhancement received the superior team award.

The squadron was singled out for revising local decoration procedures, which enabled it to process 288 decorations during fiscal year 2000, exceeding the Wing's goal by 274 percent. The newly-developed databases were identified as a best practice during the unit compliance inspection.

Among its innovative programs are a jointly-shared Line-of-Duty database and a detailed coordination checklist. Kohutanycz said it provides an up-to-date status of pending actions and statistical reports for senior managers. A working group composed of medical and personnel specialists was established to develop these procedures, and the group was also

identified as a best practice.

The Wing's Family Care Program, which is managed by Cunningham, has more than 270 participating reservists. It was praised as "well managed and error-free."

Other notable mission accomplishments include the successful deployment of 291 personnel for real-world contingencies and taskings such as Operation Joint Forge, Operation Southern Watch and Operation Northern Watch.

The MPF also backfilled one AFRC short-notice quota for the Air Expeditionary Force in January 2000.

Additionally, the 349th MSS obtained more than 1,000 technical school training quotas with only five no shows, and was credited for aggressively managing and monitoring the quotas, which ensured a no-show rate far below AFRC's goal of 1 percent.

As a further testament to its excellence, the Career Enhancement Office was selected by AFRC to assist with developing the new Career Assistance Advisor training curriculum, which was completed quickly and validated locally during the initial training session conducted by AFRC Functional Managers.

## Triumphant return

349th Air Mobility Wing and 45th Aerial Port Squadron leadership greet members of the 45th APS upon return from successful completion of their Expeditionary Operational Readiness Inspection at Pope Air Force Base, N.C., Dec. 3 - 7. Noted as exceptional performers by the Air Mobility Command Inspector General team were Tech. Sgt. Doug Smith and Staff Sgt. Thomas Bond, 45th APS. (Photo by Nan Wylie)



## Dental program extended to families

### *Services expand, coverage increases to \$1,200 maximum*

WASHINGTON – Traditional reservists and their families may now participate in an expanded U.S. government dental program.

Enrollment in the new TRICARE Dental Program is voluntary and began in December 2000, with coverage effective Feb. 1. ***Service members enrolled in the TRICARE Selected Reserve Dental Program or the TRICARE Family Member Dental Plan will be automatically enrolled in the new program.***

To enroll, service members must have at least a one-year service commitment in the active force, reserve forces or a combination of the two. Under the new plan, all eligible family members of a sponsor will be enrolled if one of them is enrolled.

Members of a reservist's family are not eligible for the TRICARE Family Member Dental Plan unless the reservist is on extended active duty for at least 24 months.

"We will now offer a more uniform benefit across beneficiary categories and include our reserve component families. The new contract offers expanded and improved benefits, and it solves some problems associated with the TRICARE Selected Reserve Dental Program. We

believe our beneficiaries will be pleased with this new dental plan," said Dr. Sue Bailey, who was assistant secretary of defense for health affairs when the contract was awarded.

In the Air Force, the Selected Reserve includes about 60,000 reservists in the Air Force Reserve Command unit program and more than 12,000 individual mobilization augmentees.

Under the current reserve dental program, the government pays all the charges for diagnostic, preventive and emergency services. For restorative services, the government picks up 90 percent of the bill for E-1s through E-4s and 80 percent for E-5s and above. The government covers 70 percent of an oral surgery bill for E-1s to E-4s and 60 percent

of the tab for E-5s and above.

Reservists and their families will qualify for the same services as above under the new TRICARE Dental Program; however, the government will pay a flat 80 percent for basic restorative coverage. The program will also cover the following services with the government picking up a percentage of the bill:

- Sealants, consultations, office visits and post-surgical services – 80 percent;
- Endodontic and periodontic (E-1 - E-4) – 70 percent;
- Endodontic and periodontic (E-5 and above), and general anesthesia – 60 percent; and
- Prosthodontic, orthodontia, medications, intravenous sedations and other restorative services -- 50 percent.

These services will include athletic mouthpieces, pulp vitality tests and porcelain veneers.

The maximum benefit coverage will increase from \$1,000 per enrollee per contract year to \$1,200. Reservists and their families will also qualify for orthodontic care – \$1,500 per enrollee per lifetime. There is an age limit for orthodontic care.

Premium costs will vary depending on the number of enrollees and type of plan.

People with questions about the program can visit the company's Web site at <http://www.ucci.com> or call 1-800-866-8499 (AFRC News Service from TRICARE and DOD news releases)

*The 349th Military Personnel Flight customer service area has applications available for Reserve members wanting to sign up for the new TRICARE Dental Program.*

*The customer service area is in Bldg. 239, Bay F.*

# EMPLOYER APPRECIATION DAY APPLICATION

Employer: Mr. Mrs. Ms. Dr. Other:

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's SSAN (Required for Passenger Manifest) : \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's Title (manager, foreman, etc.) : \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's Home Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Person to be Notified in Emergency: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's Emergency Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Area Code and Number)

## SPONSORING RESERVIST

Reservist's Rank: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reservist SSAN: \_\_\_\_\_

Reservist Duty Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Civilian Work Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

An opportunity to observe an aerial refueling mission will be offered to employers. Space is limited. Reservists will be given the chance to fly with their employer if space allows. Flights are not for family members or friends. The flight is pending approval by higher headquarters and is subject to cancellation for weather or operational reasons.

### Employer Appreciation Dates

**Medical Group** -- March 3 -- A Flight  
Chief Master Sgt. Louis Kloeppel,  
424-7301

**Logistics Group** -- May 19 --  
C Flight  
Chief Master Sgt. Marcus Okuda,  
424-5037

**Support Group** -- June 2 --  
A Flight  
Master Sgt. Patricia White, 424-4904

**Operations Group** -- July 28 --  
C Flight  
(79th ARS; 301th AS; 349th AES;  
45th & 55th APS)  
Lt. Col. Lonnie Williams, 424-1641

**Operations Group** -- Aug. 11 --  
B Flight  
(70th ARS, 312st AS, 82nd APS)  
Lt. Col. Lonnie Williams, 424-1641



# Surgeon names aerovac squadron model site

**By Tech. Sgt. Kevin Jackson**  
Wing Public Affairs

"Any time, any place, any aircraft."

That disposition and a commitment to excellence have earned the 349th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron the elite designation of Skunkworks World Class Customer Service Program Model Site recently.

Awarded by the Air Force Reserve Command's command surgeon, the designation recognizes the squadron for putting its customers first, empowering staff, eliminating barriers and reinforcing basics.

"Our squadron has a solid history of superior performance and versatility," said Lt. Col. Deborah Aspling, 349th AES commander.

"Over the past four years, we have efficiently handled downsizing from 40 to 15 aeromedical crews. When our primary aircraft, the C-141, was reassigned from Travis Air Force Base, the squadron stepped up and found a way to more effectively use limited primary aircraft to gain and maintain qualifications.

We also aggressively seek opportune aircraft to maintain our currency and mission ready status."

Proving the recognition well deserved, the squadron's unit compliance inspection in February 2000 produced two superior performers: Tech. Sgt. Linden Brenner and Marcia Marn-Horton. The AES also received positive comments on flight management and flight training.

Additionally, flight nurse and aeromedical evacuation technician medical sustainment scores improved significantly in recent years. The scores jumped from 76 percent in 1998 to 99 and 95 percent in 2000 for flight nurses and aeromedical evacuation technicians, respectively.

In May, the squadron demonstrated its mettle by earning the Air Mobility Command Rodeo Best Aeromedical C-141 Crew award at Pope Air Force Base, N.C. Even without the C-141 aircraft to refine its skills, the squadron competed against teams from around the world and received the top honor.

Aside from its technical proficiency, the squadron has also demonstrated compassion for those in need in the local community. It provided medical support and services for indigent veterans during the Veteran Administration's Bay Area Veterans' Standown at Camp Parks, Calif., in September 2000. The 349th AES, along with other units in the 349th Medical



**Customers first:** 349th AES flight nurse Maj. Debra Muhl tends to a patient with simulated injuries during Operation Pacific Warrior. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Kevin Jackson)

Group, also developed and operated a community medical clinic in Isleton, Calif., for underserved Hispanic community members.

The quality of its health services, dedication to customer satisfaction, high training standards, and unique initiatives have made the 349th AES the Air Force Reserve Command's model site for 2001.

## New commander takes 79th Air Refueling Squadron reins

Lt. Col. William Ames was appointed as the commander of the 79th Air Refueling Squadron, effective Nov. 1. Ames replaced Col. Louis Leli, who was reassigned as the 349th Air Mobility Wing vice commander.

## Annual flu shots available

Flu shots are now available in the David Grant Medical Center Immunization Clinic. Reservists can get the immunization between 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday of any unit training assembly. For more information, call the 349th Medical Group at 424-1643.

## Golden Hills Dining Facility reopens doors, serves meals

After being closed for nearly three months for renovations, the Golden Hills Dining Facility reopened Jan. 2 sporting a new interior look and expanded menu.

Fresh paint, new carpeting and other decorations will give Golden Hills an

updated appeal, but it's the new menu that has the Golden Hills staff excited.

Golden Hills plans to add a sandwich bar and Mongolian Barbecue Fridays.

## Base tax center offers services for reservists

Reservists and their dependents are eligible to use the base tax center's services for federal income tax assistance. Tax center volunteers will also assist with California state taxes, but work primarily with federal income tax.

The tax center is comprised of volunteers and is located at the Travis Air Force Base Health and Welfare Center, next to the Base Bowling Alley. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Tax services are available by appointment, but walk-ins are accepted between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. when the center is less crowded.

Call the tax center at 424-4041 to schedule an appointment. Service members

need not be in uniform or on orders to use the tax center.

## Family Readiness Office to sponsor financial seminar

Come to our workshop to find out how to pay off all your consumer debt in one to three years, how to operate on 100 percent cash and never use credit again, how to become invulnerable to economic ups and downs, how to save more than million dollars of retirement wealth in the same amount of time it would take you to pay off your mortgage, how all this can be done with your current income and much, much more.

The workshop uses a linear math debt-elimination and wealth building strategy, and is strictly educational.

Please bring a calculator and a list of all your debts, showing balances, interest rates and monthly payments of principle and interest only.

Call 424-1616 to register for the March class dates.

# Giving back to society

## Reservist extends family to 10

**By Capt. Gaelle Aronson**

Wing Public Affairs

*(The names of the foster children were changed due to State requirements. Pictures of the children also could not be taken.)*

If you've ever wondered what it takes to be a good foster care parent, Tech. Sgt. April Andersen's story should certainly help with most of the elements: personal strength and dedication, a belief that you are doing a good thing and a good head on your shoulders.

In 1993, about one year into her active duty military service, April met and married her husband Eric. She was 19, and he was 23. Seven years later, they still feel like they were destined to be together. April left active duty in 1997 and is currently the 349th Air Mobility Wing fitness coordinator, but she and Eric also own a successful swimming pool cleaning and repair business, which they started together in 1996. Their wills and destiny have also led them to participate in the foster care program.

According to April, "Foster care is not for everybody. It is for those who recognize what they have and recognize its importance."

Both April and Eric grew up in less than ideal home situations. April spent a significant portion of her childhood being raised by her grandmother, and Eric's parents divorced when he was two. She left home at 16 -- she didn't get along with her stepfather.

Interestingly, the first children they took in never actually entered the foster care program. About a year into their marriage, April and Eric petitioned for guardianship over her younger siblings, Clayton and Amanda, aged 10 and 12, when her parents got into trouble with the law and became unable to take care of them. If it had not been for April and Eric, the children would have entered the foster care program. Often, children are removed from their homes by the court and placed into the foster care system due to being in abusive households or their parents abusing drugs.

But April didn't want her siblings to enter the system. She thought: "I'm



young, I'm strong, and I can do this." She and Eric had put themselves in a good situation to take the children. They both worked several jobs and saved money, and they bought a 3-bedroom house.

Eventually, her brother left to go back to live with her parents in 1996, and that same year they had a daughter of their own, Alexis. A couple of years later, fate kicked in.

April and Eric were getting ready to move into a bigger 5-bedroom home, and the neighbors were also moving. The neighbors had been participating in foster care and their foster daughter had become friendly with Amanda. The neighbors asked April if they would be willing to take the children into their home because they were not able to take them to their next residence, which was going to be smaller. April spoke to the family about it, and everyone decided to look into what it would take to have the children, Audrey and Alan.

The process is complicated. Among other things, they had to go through a Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) fingerprinting process, and they had to clear the child abuse index. The index records whether one has ever been convicted of child abuse.

They also had to take 15 hours of training to include first aid and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation training and meet the home safety requirements. Requirements include locking up dangerous items such as knives and cleaning supplies, having evacuation plans for the entire house, having an escape ladder in a two-story home, smoke alarms, medical emergency kits, and other specifications.

In June of 1999, Alan, 9, and Audrey, 12, came to live with them in their new house. The process had taken them three months, which is the least amount possible.

April and Eric have to keep their CPR and first aid training up to date and get 15 hours of additional training annually to continue participating in the program. They are actually certified to be a foster family through a private foster family agency, which is in turn licensed by the state.

One month after they took Alan and Audrey, they took Cindy, 10, who spent one and a half years with them. Ever since, they've taken more children. There have been difficulties along the way, most of which April attributes to the foster care system.

"The system can be difficult and frustrating. It's tough because there are a

lot of agencies involved, and there is not a lot of continuity. You have to deal with your [foster care] agency, the assigned case manager, and the county social worker. And, it doesn't help matters that there is a high turnover rate for these positions," said April.

The children, who all come from broken homes, are all at different levels of functioning, and according to April, it important for a family to know a lot about the child they will sponsor. One mechanism to help the child and family get acquainted and see if it will be a good fit is the pre-placement visit, which typically lasts a few days. During the visit, the family and child see if it will be a good fit.

"My advice to try to avoid problems is to know what behaviors you are able and not able to tolerate and ask specific questions to get information. Know what will and what won't work in your home. You should also know how involved the biological parents are and if you can handle that level of involvement."

April and Eric's biggest heartbreak came when they got a call from their agency about a three-sibling set. The children had just been removed from their home after having been severely neglected. In anticipation, Eric and April bought a 15-passenger van and declined accepting other foster children. They had been told that there was no way the children would be reunified with their family. But less than one month after the children came to them, their aunt fought and won custody.

"It was heartbreaking. The five-year old boy didn't want to leave. Some families do short-term, emergency home, foster care while a relative or other adoptive family is being found, or until the children are reunified with their family. But we do long-term care. Our goal is to adopt the children and care for them until they are ready to leave us and live on their own. So it was difficult to lose them after thinking we'd have them for a long time. Those are the challenges."

But even though they've had some disappointments, Eric and April have been very successful in creating their family. Today, they have a total of eight children at home, including April's sister, who they've adopted, and their daughter Alexis.

For children who are younger than 18, there is a new program called Fost-Adopt, which allows foster parents to adopt the children in their care for free and to

continue using the state health care plan for any emotional or physical needs they may have. Eric and April are going through the process for several of the children, and it will take them six months to a year to complete.

Foster parents also have the option of petitioning for guardianship. The difference between adoption and guardianship is that biological parents lose all rights and responsibilities for the child when he or she is adopted. With guardianship, biological parents retain limited rights with their children.

"They're all great kids and they all get along," said April. "My reward is seeing them overcome their past and achieve. One of our boys has gone from D's and F's to being an average student. The oldest went from being a truant to getting A's and B's. I like to see them have goals and develop good relationships. But the big rewards will come when they have their own successful families."

Eric and April encourage and help the children to live healthy, active, lives. They all do karate with Eric, some play hockey, one of their girls swims competitively, and best of all, two are considering joining the Reserves. They value education, and another household rule is that the kids can continue to live at home past the age of 18 if through completion of college, as long as they are attending.

April also gets some feedback from the children that indicates they are happy with this family. They say that she is "reasonable." They've also told her that they feel "valued because they are asked what they think, and that they feel like they can talk about life and love." Parents with teenagers would certainly agree that these sentiments indicate a good parent-to-teen relationship.

Previous to getting involved with foster care, April had volunteered for about five years with mentoring at risk youths. "To me, foster care is even better than mentoring. We're giving our kids a chance to be successful and break the cycle. We work really, really hard with them on accepting the past, not blaming themselves for it, and looking to the future."

For most of us, it seems like a lot to handle, but Eric and April have managed their ten-person household successfully. April attributes their success to organization.

"For example, we put a chore list on the fridge—it is a detailed book that outlines

each chore and step-by-step instructions for doing it. They are to last 30 minutes a day per child, and they rotate monthly. Each chore has to be inspected by another child to ensure it was done properly. Another list I put out for everyone is the 'Help Mom, I need...' list. This way, they can communicate if they need me to get them school or other supplies. It would be complete chaos without a system."

The children are given their choice of religious preference—it is one of their rights under Title 22, which rules the foster care system. The system also demands that they gain approval before taking the children out of the county. Among other details that sometimes require approval are haircuts and ear-piercing. The children cannot be left at home alone, so April takes them almost everywhere she goes. April said they love to help and it gives them bonding time.

"We also play games, travel to outdoor places, stay physically active and visit people. For Christmas, we all went to a shelter to help other people," explained April.

In 1999 they were able to buy a third house in Vacaville: this time it had seven bedrooms to accommodate all the children. But the couple has even more plans for the future. They have bought another house and are moving back to her native town of Bakersfield. Their goal is to start a community publication that works within the community. Their first issue will come out in February, but they hope to eventually spread the idea to other communities in the Central Valley.

April admits that it's tough to be in the Reserve with her family and other endeavors, but she is proud of it and plans to stick with it. Meanwhile, she and Eric are going to stop taking more children for a while and plan on continuing with their own family. Once their foster children are grown, they may have more children of their own. They had originally wanted to have three. Meanwhile, they have been and continue to have a tremendous positive impact on our society.

"There are over 500,000 kids in the United States in foster care. This is who I am and what I'm put here to do," she concluded. "I am very stubborn. I don't know how I got my strength, but I'm glad I have it. I get my caring from my grandmother. You have to give back to society in some way. This is our way. I wish everyone could take one foster child."



# PROMOTIONS

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1



## Senior Master Sergeant

mbertus, 70<sup>th</sup> ARS  
Airgon, 349<sup>th</sup> SFS

## Master Sergeant



Bauer, 82<sup>nd</sup> APS  
negan, 349<sup>th</sup> OG  
alez Jr., 55<sup>th</sup> APS  
Graham, 55<sup>th</sup> APS  
Michael Hendrickson, 312<sup>th</sup> AS  
Gwen L. Hunter-Williams, 349<sup>th</sup> AMDS  
Joseph A. Jenkins, 45<sup>th</sup> APS  
Daryl S. Jones, 349<sup>th</sup> EMS  
Ian A. McWhorter, 349<sup>th</sup> AMW  
Donna Paige, 349<sup>th</sup> SPTG  
Emanuel A. Pestana, 349<sup>th</sup> MDS  
Robert Topette, 55<sup>th</sup> APS



## Technical Sergeant

Lisa G. Anderson, 55<sup>th</sup> APS  
Jeffrey E. Arcilla, 349<sup>th</sup> ASTS  
Robert A. Beste, 349<sup>th</sup> AGS  
Monte R. Borchert, 749<sup>th</sup> AGS  
Ava N. Bradford, 82<sup>nd</sup> APS  
Daniel G. Cabrera, 55<sup>th</sup> APS  
David L. Carraher, 82<sup>nd</sup> APS  
Susan S. Choe, 55<sup>th</sup> APS  
Creighton Dennis, 301<sup>st</sup> AS



## Staff Sergeant

Brandi L. Benavidez, 349<sup>th</sup> LSS  
Ronald Brokenbrough, 349<sup>th</sup> ALCF  
Clifford Bumanglag, 749<sup>th</sup> AGS  
Efren J. Flores, 82<sup>nd</sup> APS  
Alan W. Frey, 349<sup>th</sup> CES  
Laurie G. Garrison, 349<sup>th</sup> MAS  
Bobby J. Gonzalez, 82<sup>nd</sup> APS  
Shannon Gutierrez, 45<sup>th</sup> APS  
Bradley J. Halsey, Det. 2

Michael C. Hermon, 349<sup>th</sup> AMDS  
Sylvia C. Jones, 349<sup>th</sup> MAS  
Kelly L. Kjelstrom, 349<sup>th</sup> AES  
Karl E. Moore, 349<sup>th</sup> LSS  
James E. Nelson II, 349<sup>th</sup> EMS  
Natalie J. Peterson, 45<sup>th</sup> APS  
Joel A. Sanders, 349<sup>th</sup> CES  
Sindy S. Thao, 349<sup>th</sup> AMDS  
Tejon Woods, 349<sup>th</sup> ASTS



## Senior Airman

Ana C. Baber, 312<sup>th</sup> AS  
Hugo D. Delmoral, 349<sup>th</sup> SFS  
Jesse J. Elmhorst, 45<sup>th</sup> APS  
Marylou Gonzalez, 349<sup>th</sup> AMDS  
Kari R. Kelso, 349<sup>th</sup> LSS  
Kurtis J. Pecot, Det. 2  
Samuel A. Roberts, 349<sup>th</sup> CRS  
Tristina L. Senter, 349<sup>th</sup> ALCF  
Shawn F. Spradley, 349<sup>th</sup> CS  
Si Tao, 349<sup>th</sup> MSS



## Airman First Class

Muberra Kibar, 349<sup>th</sup> AMW  
Jason M. Leuthold, 349<sup>th</sup> CRS  
Steven W. Levi, 349<sup>th</sup> ASTS  
Albert R. Martinez, 349<sup>th</sup> AGS  
Sean J. O'Neal, 349<sup>th</sup> ASTS  
Jacky N. C. Orenca, 349<sup>th</sup> ASTS  
Bessie E. Sandoval, 349<sup>th</sup> ASTS  
Andrew A. Solis, 349<sup>th</sup> ASTS

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